8: Black S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe El

000 put and are without value unless properly interpreted. These statistics should not be rejected outright, but should be juxtaposed with the mass of evidence available from other sources, and then interpreted. It would be misleading to accept blindly every report on life behind the Iron Curtain, whether brought by refugees, published in the exile press, or found in letters
• 204 coming from that area. The Communist press tries to suppress most adverse information but there are limits to such a policy. If the Iron Curtain papers complain about any material shortage or attack any given material situation, it is a sure sign that the situation has become unbearable for the citizens.

362 On the basis of joint interpretation of the press, private information, and statistical data, the following picture of the economic and social conditions of the captive nations may be formed. The housing situation is bad and probably getting worse because, however large the current building project may be, it cannot provide homes for all those living in the existing deteriorating dwellings and because the building cannot keep up with the rapid increase of urban populations. New apartment houses are jerry-built and in need of constant repair, and the family of a privileged worker or technician will be happy if his services are recompensed by a flat of two rooms with kitchenette and shower. The great urban masses are housed much below this level. The housing problem has not been solved in Russia outside of Moscow. There is no reason to believe it has been solved in Eastern Europe. It will take a dozen or more years to rebuild the war-destroyed cities of East Berlin, Dresden, Budapest, Warsaw, Danzig, Stettin, and Breslau, to mention only a few, and, even when these cities are restored, the quality of the new construction will almost certainly be inferior to that of the prewar years. According to the United Nations, the rate of new construction behind the Iron Curtain is several times slower than it is in Scandinavia, Britain, and Western Germany. Domestic